

LIFESTYLES WITH SYLVIA



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first column of *LifeStyles with Sylvia*. In the following weeks we will explore the many facets of nutrition and how the choices we all make about the way we eat directly affect the outcome of our overall health, vitality, energy and emotional well-being.

To start, it is important to set goals. Judging by the very enthusiastic turnout at my recent nutrition/weight loss support workshops, most of you are interested in losing weight. Knowledge is key to achieving this goal, and my column will be devoted to helping you learn how to make positive decisions about food, to stay focused and to achieve your weight loss goals.

As we venture forward together, I would like to take this opportunity in this first column to say hello to my old friends. We have seen many changes over the years here at the SRC, and the club is currently at its very best, providing members with services dedicated to helping you achieve good health through exciting and diverse programs. Our instructors are top-notch professionals who work together to give you the best possible experience and help you achieve the results you want. Do yourself a favor and put them to work!

To my new friends: Welcome to the SRC family. And we really are just that—a family. Depending on the time of day you arrive for your workout, you will come to see the same faces over and over again. The people at the SRC are a truly committed lot, and it is my wish that you feel comfortable and take advantage of all the wonderful things we have to offer. Whether you are looking to lose weight, gain weight, build muscle, gain flexibility or just shake those hips, it's all here under one roof.

That said, the SRC can only help you if you are committed to helping yourself. That's why the topic of this first column is *Lifestyle*. The life you lead and the decisions you make every day, no matter how small, contribute to your health; these decisions can make food your friend or your enemy. There are no quick fixes or magic pills. Instead, a commitment to a healthy lifestyle is the only thing that will insure your success. Don't worry though, you won't have to do this alone. I'm here to help, and my goal is to arm you with the knowledge you need to make wise decisions about what you put into your body.

To get things started, here are five lifestyle tips to help put you on the road to success:

- 1. Attitude Is Everything:** Ready to make a change? Well consider this the first day of the rest of your life, and remember that believing in yourself is a crucial part of your success. Know that you are worth the effort and that you can achieve your goals. In fact, I want you to get up every morning and celebrate yourself!

- 2. Eat Breakfast:** Weight loss boils down to the amount of calories we consume versus the amount of calories we expend. That's precisely why breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Breakfast gives our bodies the fuel we need to run efficiently, and helps keep us from mindless snacking as the day goes on. To make breakfast especially effective, try eating a whole grain such as oatmeal (steel cut) and a protein, such as yogurt. You'll feel the positive effects that a healthy breakfast can bring almost immediately.
- 3. Drink Hot Water:** Believe it or not, the cleansing and calming effects of hot water are amazing. Don't believe me? This column will ask you to trust blindly sometimes. Keep an open mind and I bet you'll like the changes you see.
- 4. Eat Real Food:** A healthy lifestyle requires making good choices about the foods we put into our body. I will delve into menu suggestions in later columns, but opting for real food is an important first step. Real foods are foods found in nature. They are fresh, unprocessed and simple, and include *high-fiber foods* (beans, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds), *quality proteins* (beans, whole soy foods—tofu, edamame and tempeh—nuts, eggs, fish, lean poultry, lamb, and pork or beef—preferably organic, grass-fed, or range-fed), *healthy fats and oils* (fish oil, extra virgin olive oil, avocados and avocado oil, walnut oil, grapeseed oil and flax oil) and *smart carbohydrates* (whole grains, beans, vegetables, and fruits). At the same time, reduce your salt intake and eliminate junk food, also known as food made with “the white stuff” (white flour and sugar).
- 5. Know Your Goal:** Setting a goal is the first step, but sticking to it is the key to success. Make sure to set goals that are both healthy and comfortable. Not sure what your goal weight should be? Sign up for a one-on-one counseling session and we'll figure it out together.

In my next column I will focus on portion control. How much is enough and how often should I be eating? What should I be drinking and how much?

Remember, you are not in this alone. Feel free to email me with any questions you have and I will even address those most commonly asked questions in this column. I also want to hear how you're doing: Stop me in the club or set up a private session with me. I also encourage you to create a support group by inviting friends to join in a weekly counseling session.

At the SRC, everybody is working to help you reach your goals, but the first step is making your own personal commitment to a healthy lifestyle. It may not always be easy, but remember: every step of the way, with every new day, the possibilities are endless!

Best regards,
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